

CARTSNEWS

The Official Journal of the Carolina Token Society

ISSUE #32

November 2011

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings to all CARTS members,

If you think the remainder of this President's Message seems familiar, you are not experiencing *deja vu*. The bottom of this letter is copied from the November edition of CARTSNEWS exactly one year ago. At that time we were anticipating our first ever joint meeting with our brothers from the Southeastern Token Society. The feedback from that meeting was so good that we have now planned our second joint meeting with our SETS brethren. The time and the place is virtually the same as last year. See below for more details and page 10 in this issue for a map to the meeting place.

The meeting will be held at the **Super 8 Motel in Villa Rica, Georgia on Saturday, November 12th**. The Super 8 has a meeting room on the second floor and the meeting will begin at 9am. We will have ample time for swapping and selling that morning, with a short Powerpoint program on *The Numismatics of Fort Sumter* at noon given by yours truly.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Super 8 for very reasonable rates for the Friday night before the meeting. I stayed at this establishment last year and it is OK, but don't expect the Hilton. The room was clean, but the furniture was not brand new. There is a free continental breakfast included in the room rate, but the fare is light. (No bacon and eggs.) For those taking their wives you may want a better room and there is a Best Western immediately next door which seems to be a nicer place. Reservations at the Super 8 must be made at least one week prior to the date of the show. Cancellations must be made 48 hours in advance. The phone number for the motel is 770-459-8000 and you need to mention TOKEN SOCIETY to get the special rates.

The motel is located at 128 Hwy 61 Connector, Villa Rica, GA 30180. Their email address is: super8villarica@mindspring.com. See above for the

phone number. The motel is located immediately off of exit 24 of I-20 about 18 miles west of downtown Atlanta. If you are traveling from North or South Carolina, turn right off the exit ramp and look immediately to your right. The Super 8 is located immediately behind the Krystal and the Kentucky Fried Chicken / Taco Bell. For those arriving on Friday night, we have planned an early dinner excursion to the local O'Charley's restaurant located at that same exit.

I hope we have a good turnout from CARTS again this year. There were about 15 members from both organizations at the meeting last year and I hope the turnout will exceed that this year. See you then.

Regards,

Tony Chibbaro, President of CARTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Just a reminder, at the spring meeting—to be held again just west of Winston-Salem—there will be a fund raising auction. Donations are solicited anytime prior to that meeting. Look through your duplicates for those items you could bear to part with and send them to the editor, Don Bailey.

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Comments, suggestions, reactions, (maybe even) criticism, will be gratefully accepted. Let us know! **Articles, New Finds, Announcements, and Classifieds to Don Bailey only! Dues to Bob King only!**

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New Finds from South Carolina

Tony Chibbaro

Within a span of one week during the month of September I was fortunate to find two previously unknown trade tokens from the Edisto River area of South Carolina. (Here's some interesting facts I just learned about the Edisto River. It is the longest completely undammed, unleveed river in North America. The 206 mile long river system has two main tributaries, called the North Fork and the South Fork, which originate from springs in the Sandhills region of the western central part of the state. It is also the longest and largest river system completely contained within the borders of South Carolina.)

On Labor Day weekend in Omaha, Nebraska I was very happy to purchase the token pictured below. From Bamberg, SC (which is situated about 3 miles from the South Fork of the Edisto that forms

the boundary between Bamberg and Orangeburg Counties) and issued by W.W. Lightsey, this 20mm 5¢ aluminum token is presently the only token known from this merchant.



At first I was excited that this might be a lumber token because of the last name of the issuer (note all the lumber tokens from the Lightseys of Crockettville and Miley, SC), but after researching him in the business directories I have concluded that he was simply a storeowner. His name appears from 1896 to 1899 as operating a grocery store and butcher shop in Bamberg. Nothing appears in the 1900s in the business directories, but he is listed in one of the State of South Carolina

Legislative Reports as a magistrate in Bamberg County in 1903. In a 1920 Legislative Report he is also shown as the co-owner of a business called the Southern Drug Syndicate, a newly incorporated business in Charleston.



One week later during the Aiken coin show I was shown a previously unknown token from Trenton, SC. Trenton is a small town in Edgefield County, not far from the springs which give rise to the South Fork of the Edisto River. The 20mm 5¢ aluminum token was issued by F.W. Miller, who operated a general store from 1907 through 1910. Trenton is a very small town, with a population of only 226 in the 2000 census. But several tokens have been issued by merchants in Trenton and it is unusual for such a small town to have produced more than a token or two. With the addition of Miller's token above, there are now four merchants known to have issued tokens with a Trenton address.

OF "CHECKS" AND SIGNATURES

Tony Chibbaro

One of the things that I find interesting about collecting tokens is exploring the flavor of "the times" when tokens were in use and comparing it to modern day. For example, I like to look at old advertising pieces such as "trade cards" to see how certain phrases were used and what was pictured in the ads. This enhances the collecting experience and allows me to get a better feeling for what it was like back then.

Many years ago a fellow collector and I were talking about tokens and I heard him use the term "trade checks." He was a veteran collector and I was just a novice, but I was pretty sure he was talking about trade tokens. I asked him about it anyway and he replied that the term was the proper contemporaneous name for trade tokens and went on to explain that this was the name that the token manufacturers used to refer to what we now call tokens. (Since then I have seen several catalogs produced by these manufacturers of 100 years ago, and sure enough, that is what the trade tokens are labeled.) We went on to discuss other names for tokens at the time, including those that were used by the people who utilized the tokens in daily commerce - slang names such as "loonies" and "babbit." These two terms were used in South

Carolina by cotton mill operatives and lumber company employees respectively and are indigenous to the Palmetto State. There are other names which originated in other areas, "brozenes" and "doodlum" are two which come to mind from Mississippi.

All this discussion about the word "checks" got me to thinking about the modern bank drafts that we call by that name, along with the tokens that were called such in years past, and the similarities between the two. Take a look at the tokens illustrated below. Besides being instruments of credit just like a bank check, each one also carries a signature in a way that is reminiscent of their paper namesakes.





The two tokens pictured above were both issued by D.W. Alderman & Sons Co. of Alcolu, SC. The Alderman family ran a large sawmill and lumber company in this small town in Clarendon County. The long-lived company was first headed by D.W. Alderman himself, but was later operated by his sons. R.J. Alderman was president when the 38mm bimetallic \$1.00 piece was issued, but later his brother P.R. Alderman succeeded him and issued the oval brass 1¢ piece shown immediately above.

extremely difficult to read. Randy Chambers, with no way of knowing whose signature it actually was, thought that it read "R. Cramptopel." It was only years later when I found a letter upon which the officers of the company were listed did I learn that the signature was that of treasurer R.L. Montague.



One of the peculiar aspects of signatures as they appear on tokens is the fact that sometimes the handwriting is just as sloppy as that which appears on paper bank drafts. Such an example is shown above, issued by the Atlantic Coast Lumber Company in Georgetown, SC. Originally cataloged by Randy Chambers in his series on South Carolina tokens in the *TAMS Journal*, the 21mm bimetallic token sports a signature that is



A few years later, when the Atlantic Coast Lumber Company had grown into a corporation, two more series of tokens were issued by the company. Assistant treasurer E.L. Lloyd's signature appears on the 20mm bimetallic 5¢ token pictured, while company president F.S. Farr appears on the 31mm bimetallic 50¢ token. Both of these signatures are much easier to read than that of Montague's pictured earlier.



Also hailing from the city of Georgetown is this token from the Sampit Contracting Company. The 36mm octagonal aluminum token displays the signature of company owner Lafonzo Brinkley. Brinkley, who also owned the Brinkley Land Company, was involved somehow with the Atlantic Coast Lumber Corporation, perhaps as an independent contractor.



T.J. Martin of Pelzer, SC issued perhaps the first "signed" token in the state. The 38mm brass token is unusual in another aspect also - it has a reeded edge. The incuse signature also seems to be double struck. Difficult to see in this photo because of the weak strike, the signature appears directly above the deeply struck denomination. Martin also issued 25¢ tokens. Both

denominations are very rare and were issued in the 1880s or early 1890s.



I.J. Phillips of Pelzer, SC was probably aware of T.J. Martin's tokens (pictured earlier) as they both operated stores in the same town, and that may account for his issuance of tokens with his own signature. Phillips went one step further and had the name of his hometown placed on the token in cursive writing also. This signature is another difficult one to read in that for a long period of time I believed that the issuer's name was "J.J. Phillips Co." It was not until last year when I found a short online biography which identified the issuer as Isaac J. Phillips.



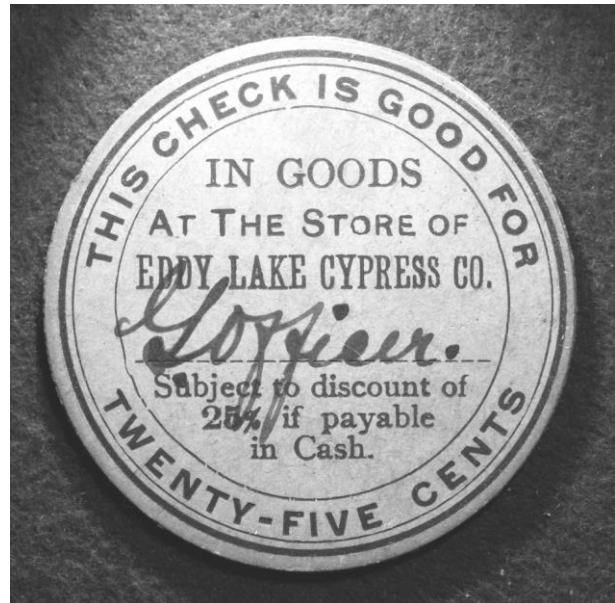
Similar in appearance to the I.J. Phillips token above, with the exception of the cursive town name, is this token issued by Chafee Brothers of Langley, SC. The 24mm brass token has a "good for 10¢ in merchandise" reverse and was probably struck by the same token manufacturer as the Phillips token.



Another bimetallic token with a signature was issued by N.S. Gibson of Winona, SC. Gibson's 24mm bimetallic 10¢ token is interesting in that his name appears twice on the obverse. Once in regular block letters and again underneath as a cursive signature, although the aluminum surface has deteriorated somewhat, making the signature difficult to make out.

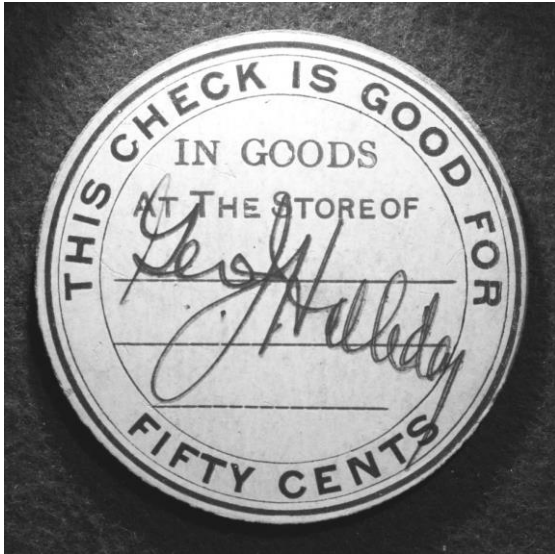


Jeweler Paul S. Crosby of Spartanburg decided that his signature needed to appear on his tokens also. The 35mm aluminum token's reverse is different from those above in that it offers \$1.00 off on a new watch. Tokens like this functioned like coupons do in today's world, as a way of stimulating trade and drawing in new business.



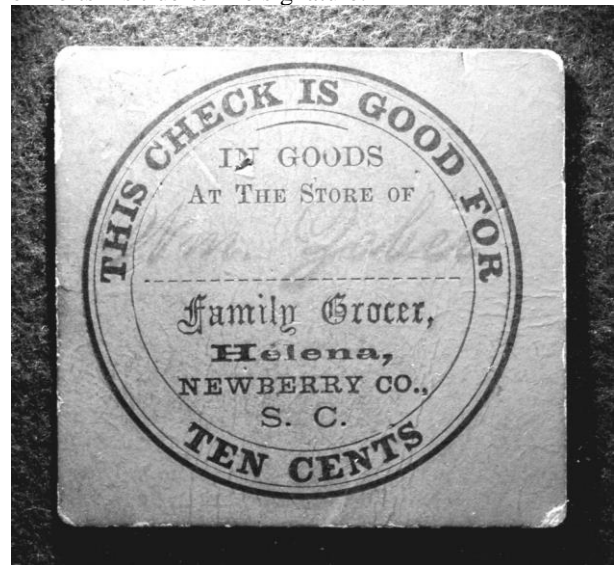
An even more interesting type of signature token and one that even more resembles a bank draft is pictured above. Exhibiting an actual true-to-life signature in black ink is this cardboard example issued (and signed!) by George Officer, the president of the Eddy Lake Cypress Company. The 37mm lilac-colored cardboard token is extremely rare, as is the only other token known from the company - a gray-colored \$1.00 token that also shows the owner's handwritten signature. An intriguing aspect of these cardboard tokens is the blank lines in the center of the obverse, left blank so that the issuer can sign them in person, exactly like the signature line on a paper bank draft.

Pictured below is another cardboard token very similar in nature to the ones issued by The Eddy Lake Cypress Company. This one was issued by George J. Holliday of Gallivant's Ferry, SC. Evidently Holliday purchased some generic tokens which did not have his name or company printed on them, and signed them in person as they were issued. Six different denominations were issued - \$2, \$1, 50¢, 25¢, 10¢, and 5¢ - each one in a different color. Some are signed in person in ink and others display a rubber-stamped signature. This 37mm 50¢ token in white cardboard exhibits a real ink signature.



The last token in our group of signature tokens was issued by William Zobel of Helena, SC. Two denominations of Zobel's square cardboard tokens are known. This 38mm 10¢ square token in orange

cardboard displays Zobel's rubber-stamped signature. The only other denomination known to be issued by Zobel, a large 50mm \$2 token in green cardboard, exhibits his true-to-life signature.



COMER/LOVELACE TOKENS: FOUR NEW FINDS

Lamar Bland

PART 1: COMER & CO. TOKENS

Within the last year this token was offered for sale on eBay:



C. L. Comer & Co. / (prop) / Jennings, / N. C. // Good For / 25¢ / In Trade – R, Al, 26mm.

Because I had previously known about Jennings Store tokens, also from Jennings, N.C., the Comer token inspired me to learn more about token use in

the “country store culture” of Iredell and adjoining counties. I subsequently learned that a Comer & Co 5¢ token existed (documented by Bob King), as well as a \$1 token, which was unknown before now. These two are pictured and described below.



C. L. Comer & Co. / (prop) / Jennings, / N. C. // Good For / 5¢ / In Trade – R, Al, 21mm.



C. L. Comer & Company / Jennings, / (prop) / N. C. // Good For / * 100 * / -In- / Merchandise – R, Al, 36mm.

My source for the new \$1.00 find is the daughter-in-law of Commie Lee Comer, the man who issued the tokens. He was born in 1893 and died in 1964. She is Jean Comer, who operated the Comer and Company store with Commie's son (her husband Charles Mitchell Comer) after World War II, until her husband's death in 1993. She remembers Commie's tokens, but says that later generations did not use them.

The tokens would have been a product of the 1930's Depression and the relative isolation of Jennings, N.C. The building where they were used is pictured as it stands today a few miles northwest of Union Grove, N.C. Commie Comer, his wife Dina Mitchell Comer, and their grand-daughter Rebecca Comer, appear in the second photo.



Comer & Co. Store



C. L. Comer and Family

Commie built his store in Iredell County in 1935, beside the new Statesville-to-Wilkesboro highway.

He entered into partnership with S.V. Tomlinson of North Wilkesboro, calling their venture—as the tokens indicate—“Comer and Company.” Business was not limited to the general store. Next door is “the hammer mill” (Jean Comer’s phrase), also still standing.



Comer “Hammer Mill”

Like neighboring store-owner Turner Jennings (who additionally ran a sawmill and a cotton gin), Commie operated more than one business. The “hammer mill” was a granary for processing farmers’ corn.

PART 2: EARLIER LOVELACE TOKENS

Comer and Company was not Commie’s first store, however. Bob King tells me that Dun and Bradstreet records a Comer general store in New Castle, Wilkes County, from 1917 to 1926. I searched for New Castle on-line, discovering, from the Wilkes County Topographical Map, that the town no longer exists. New Castle Township does, though. I drove to the area, slightly north of the Iredell County line, and located this vacant building which seemed to be in the right location.



The First Comer Store

When I first met her, Jean Comer told me that an older Comer store was still standing. She later confirmed that I had photographed it in this picture. She said that when Commie returned from

World War I he had bought an interest in the store which was there, owned by W.J. Templeton.

According to *IREDELL COUNTY LANDMARKS* (1976), that building actually pre-dates the Civil War, and had other owners before Templeton, including Turner Jennings. Dun and Bradstreet indicates that Turner owned Jennings Cash Store in Lovelace, Wilkes County, from 1905 to 1908. Like New Castle, Lovelace no longer exists as a town. But the Wilkes County Topographical Map, mentioned above, confirms the location of the Templeton Store as one mile distant from the “historical” (obsolete) town of Lovelace.

The store is large enough to have undergone the implied growth of multiple owners. When I looked inside, I could see shelves and boxed areas, appropriate in size for commerce. Country stores were often locations for mail as well. Government data shows postal service in New Castle from 1828 until 1934, and in Lovelace from 1877 until 1933.

I mention this historical record because three new tokens from Lovelace have surfaced: Lovelace Cash Store tokens in 10, 50, and \$1 denominations. Images of the common obverse and the various reverses follow.



Lovelace 10, 50 and 1.00 reverses. All are aluminum. Diameters are 24mm, 30mm, and 34mm, respectively

At first glance, one might assume that Turner Jennings issued these tokens because of the “Cash Store” reference. He had used tokens in 5, 10, 25,

50, and \$1 denominations at his Jennings, N.C. store, and these three Lovelace tokens match their counterparts in aluminum content and millimeter size. The reverses of the “50” tokens are exact duplicates. If both sets were used at approximately the same time—in the 1920’s or earlier—Jennings may have had the Lovelace token read “Lovelace Cash Store,” instead of “Jennings Cash Store,” to distinguish its location in a different county.

But there are also good reasons for linking the tokens to Commie Comer.

FIRST: While Jennings used tokens which named himself (J.T. Jennings) at his store in Jennings, no tokens bearing his name are known for other locations, including Lovelace. While the phrase “Cash Store” on the Lovelace tokens resembles the phrase “Jennings Cash Store” in the Dun and Bradstreet entry, the use of the word “Lovelace” in the token phrase may imply a later, more local owner. Jennings’ ownership of the Lovelace store was short-lived, from 1905 to 1908, and he lived in Jennings in Iredell County. Commie lived in this house (still standing) next to this store in Wilkes County.



Commie’s House

SECOND: I could find no other candidate for 20th century ownership of the Lovelace store than Jennings, W.J. Templeton, and Comer. Though Templeton probably bought the store from Jennings, there is no evidence he issued tokens between 1909 and 1917. There is a gap in records between 1927 and 1935, but it seems likely that once Commie bought the store in 1917 he operated it until he built his new store in 1935.

THIRD: In addition to being friends with Jennings, Commie also knew a different store-owner in a nearby location who also issued tokens during this same 1920’s and 30’s era. He therefore

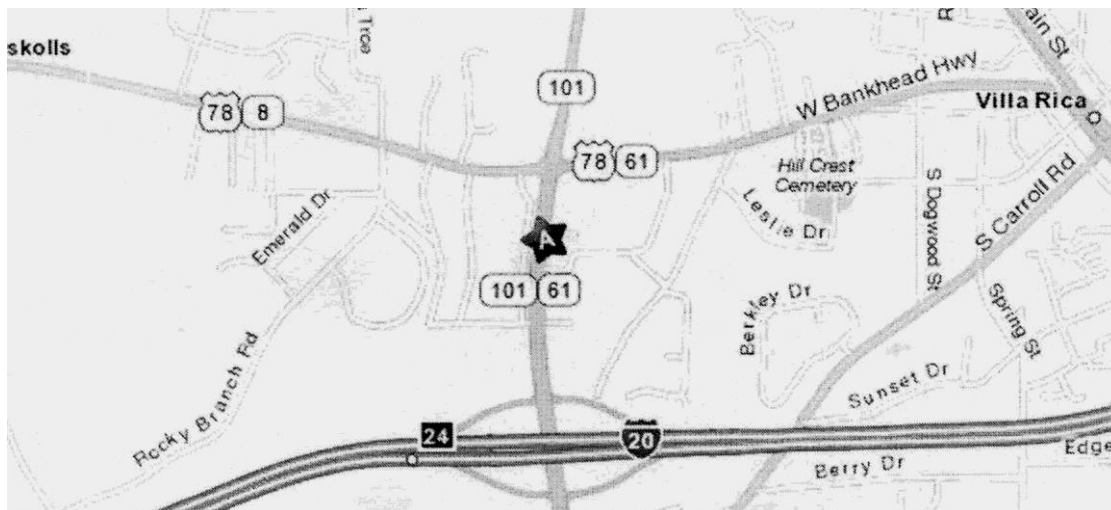
knew their value in business well before his confirmed Comer and Co tokens of the mid 1930's.

FINALLY: The Lovelace tokens came from the same collection—WITHIN THE COMER FAMILY—as the other finds I reference in this article. No Jennings Store tokens were in this collection. And no member of the Turner Jennings family has indicated an awareness of Lovelace Cash Store tokens.

In spite of my inconclusive attribution of these Lovelace tokens, I am indebted to people in Iredell and Wilkes County who have helped my research reach this point, specifically Matthew Comer, David Hicks, Annie Jarvis, and Burl Johnson. I especially thank Jean Comer, whose enthusiasm, generosity, and hospitality has made the research so enjoyable. All five have helped preserve this record of an important Iredell/Wilkes institution—the country store.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW! REMEMBER THE NOVEMBER 12
CARTS/SETS MEETING IN VILLA RICA, GA**

MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF SUPER 8 IN VILLA RICA, GA



CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED

WANTED: MAVERICK TOKENS FROM CLIFTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY AND PACOLET MANUFACTURING COMPANY. Will pay \$200 for the first metal trade token in nice condition from either of these companies. Tony Chibbaro, PO Box 420, Prosperity, SC 29127
chibbaro@mindspring.com (803-530-3668).

SALE

FOR SALE: CLIFTON MANUFACTURING CO FROM CLIFTON & CONVERSE, SC - 5 different Pieces of Cardboard Coupon Scrip (1¢, 2¢ 5¢, 10¢ & 25¢) \$3.00 + SASE or 2 sets for \$5.00 + SASE. Steven Kawalec P.O. Box 4281 Clifton, NJ 07012 Owlprowler@aol.com